



Oika: The Intelligence of Place

A 90-minute public conversation with Dr. Rich Blundell about Oika, an emerging science of ecological intelligence, and how it is expressed in the nature and culture of the Cape and Islands. For local libraries, museums, nature centers, land trusts, and civic groups.

ABOUT THE TALK

Oika (from the Greek *oikos*, meaning home or habitat) is a neologism for the deep dynamics of natural intelligence inherent in living and nonliving systems. As a philosophy, Oika is also a suite of principles, perceptions, and practices derived from that ecological intelligence. The talk introduces the core principles of Oika and shows how intelligence does not begin with humans, how places teach us, and how human well-being depends on a kind of ecological perception we have largely forgotten how to cultivate. Drawing on geology, evolutionary biology, indigenous knowledge, and the philosophy of mind, it offers an accessible entry point to a way of seeing that reconnects scientific knowledge with personal meaning and ecological belonging.

Local educators, conservationists, and wellness professionals are especially encouraged to attend. The talk also previews new Oika educational opportunities offered through *Beautiful Futures Lab* and *Origin School* on the Cape and Islands this summer.

WHAT AUDIENCES TAKE AWAY

- A clear introduction to Oika as a framework for ecological perception.
- New vocabulary and frameworks for conservationists and educators to deepen their work.
- Stories of Oika intelligence at work in landscapes, species, and human communities, drawn from Cape Cod habitats and from fieldwork around the world.
- Practical entry points for experiencing Oika in their own place, work, or curiosity.
- A grounded way of thinking about contemporary issues including media, AI, education, and the human-nature relationship.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER



Dr. Rich Blundell holds a PhD in transformative natural history learning from Macquarie University's Big History Institute. He has conducted ecological fieldwork across all of Earth's major habitats over four decades and holds a USCG 100-ton Master's license with sail endorsement. He is the founder of Beautiful Futures Lab, a teacher training program, and Origin School, an immersive place-based curriculum. His work has received support from the National Science Foundation for public communication of science, multiple awards for innovation in education and media, and ongoing funding from Rockefeller Philanthropic Advisors since 2017. He currently serves as Natural Historian for the Maria Mitchell Association on Nantucket.

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